

MEMORANDUM

To: Planning and Economic Development Committee

Date: March 11, 2009

From: Mark Combs, Public Works Director

Prepared by: Maggie Ullman, Energy Coordinator

Subject: Green Development Density Bonus Draft

Summary Statement: This is to provide City Council with a status report in Phase I of developing green development incentives for the City of Asheville.

Background: The City of Asheville was authorized by Session Law 2008-22, formerly House Bill 1097, to create an ordinance incentivizing green development. The Sustainability Advisory Committee for Energy and the Environment (SACEE) worked from January 2008 - July 2008 researching local/ national/ international green development best practices. The product of this research is nine parameters that establish the framework for incentivizing green development (see Attachment-I). Phase I for development of this incentive package is the development of a score card to determine eligibility for a green development density bonus. Phase II will evaluate an expedited review process and reduced permitting fees. Phase III will investigate tax incentives and infrastructure cost sharing. Completion of the total package is anticipated to be early winter 2009.

The green score card is intended to accompany the affordable housing density bonus that is currently under development. Most of the elements of the score card are derived from the green elements in the Water Cost Participation application designed by SACEE and approved by Council in 2008. Additional elements of the score card were added to support expansion of sustainability concepts to encompass social and economic factors in addition to environmental factors. Attachment-II is a draft of this form. Before this score card is finalized staff intends on soliciting comments from the following groups: Planning Department Staff, Affordable Housing Working Group, SACEE, the Housing and Community Development Committee, and a second review from the Planning Economic Development committee. After the appropriate committees review the density bonus staff intends on presenting to the Planning and Zoning Committee with a request for approval later this spring.

This staff report is to serve as an informational update.

Attachment-I

SACEE Recommendations for SL 2008-22 Green Development Incentives

Recommendations:

1. Evaluate all existing development and affordable housing incentives provided by the City and weave them together with the green development incentives to serve the purpose of designing a comprehensive package of sustainable community incentives.
2. Provide several different incentives that can be received through an application process. Incentives will include but are not limited to:
 - a. Tax incentives
 - b. Expedited review process
 - c. Reduction in permitting fees
 - d. Density bonus
 - e. Infrastructure cost sharing
3. Develop a tiered point system based on green and affordable housing components that includes a cap to limit the amount of incentives received.
4. Develop a format for application that has two primary tracks: residential and commercial.
5. Utilize existing verifiers including but not limited to:
 - a. LEED
 - b. Healthy Build Homes
 - c. Energy Star
6. Develop a performance contract measure to ensure completion of sustainability measures.
7. Ensure incentives are provided on a long term basis to provide a secure opportunity for developers to utilize the incentives.
8. Take into consideration the corridor development zone that is proposed in the Affordable Housing Plan.
9. Consider adjusting the existing fee structure so costs by the city are recuperated as well as adjusting the fee structure to incentivize development that supports Councils strategic goals or safety, sustainability, green and affordable.

Attachment-II

Developer: _____ Project Location: _____

Date: _____

Evaluation Criteria	Points	Score	Comments
Accessibility: Proximity to services and employment centers within one mile			
Proximity to transit line within ½ mile			
Infill on existing street not requiring extensive new infrastructure, such as storm drains, curbs, sidewalks			
Using XX% of materials from within a 300 mile radius			
Company participates in a work force development program			
All employees working on project earn a living wage as defined in supporting document			
Company subsidizes transit for employees and/or has a formal alternative commute program for staff			
Project has dedicated land for a community garden space			
Drought resistant landscape plan (or No invasive/All native species)			<i>Refer to UDO</i>
Provide permeable surfaces for ≥25% of paved area			
Project has rainwater collection			
Project has grey water system			
Energy efficient items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two or more Energy Star Appliances - Energy Star Windows - All mechanical equipment and ducts in conditioned space - 75% CFL's or 25% pin-based fixtures - Plumb and wire for future renewables 			
Project meets Energy Star Homes requirements			
Healthy Built Homes Certification			
LEED for New Construction			
LEED for New Construction Gold or Platinum			
Solar thermal hot water heating system			
Passive Solar design			
Photo Voltaic Solar Electricity			
Wind Energy			
Geothermal Energy			